

## **Adolescents and eating disorders**

Eating issues, concerns, conditions and disorders are an increasingly prevalent part of school life these days, making it a huge concern for parents and teachers alike. How to approach the problem, how to address it and who to refer to, are the questions most often asked.

Tanya Wyatt has her own reasons for being interested in helping this particular group of adolescents recover, and she started The Happy Body with this purpose in mind. As a professional ballet dancer in her younger years, she experienced a myriad of eating problems in her attempts to stay thin – from ‘starving’ and purging, to taking medications – she came out the other side of a very harsh, aesthetically-driven environment with a great deal of understanding and empathy for those in the grips of these ‘disorders’.

Tanya loves her body now and is determined to help others love theirs. Much of her work over the years has been with sufferers of eating disorders and she does this, generally, in conjunction with a psychologist, who plays a vital role in helping clients understand the primary emotional issues driving their eating habits.

It’s not just eating issues Tanya’s interested in however – she is very keen to work with anyone who may have a problem believing that he/she (and his/her body) is beautiful. Eating disorders can start for seemingly insignificant reasons, so prevention is far less traumatic than treatment.

Tanya has a relaxed and enjoyment-based approach to food; relates remarkably well to teenagers and believes in changing habits gently and gradually.

She offers her help in one of two ways. The first is through private work with clients (i.e. the teenager experiencing the issue). The other is through delivering talks to groups of teenagers on the above issues. These talks can be delivered at schools.